

NEWS RELEASE



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USDA TO LAUNCH NATIONAL 2007 NAHMS DAIRY STUDY

Richmond, Virginia – Through the National Animal Health Monitoring System (NAHMS), the U.S. Department of Agriculture is launching its fourth national study of America's dairy producers. Priority health and health management issues facing the U.S. dairy industry are the focus of this in-depth study.

Beginning January 1, representatives from USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) will contact randomly selected dairy producers to participate in the Dairy 2007 study. Information for the study will be collected from producers in the 17 states, including **Virginia**, that represent 79 percent of all U.S. dairy herds and 82 percent of all U.S. dairy cows.

"The Dairy 2007 study is a grass-roots effort to gather health data about the most important asset on America's dairy farms – the dairy cow and her offspring," said **Kevin Barnes**, director of the NASS **Virginia** Field Office. "In order to continue to be highly productive, the U.S. dairy industry relies on this objective, science-based information regarding successful management practices."

Dairy producers will be asked to provide data regarding herd management, herd health, disease prevention practices and numerous other aspects of their operations. The Dairy 2007 study will identify production practices and health measures that promote efficient production and improve product quality.

"By participating in the Dairy 2007 study, producers will help the U.S. dairy industry and their own operation by contributing to the development of reliable and valuable information," added **Barnes**. "This information is used to define and evaluate current management practices and trends and help policymakers and industry make informed decisions. It will also assist researchers and private enterprise in addressing vital issues related to dairy cattle health and productivity and much more."

As with all NAHMS studies, all individual responses are kept strictly confidential and used only in combination with other responses to report regional and U.S. estimates. This assures that no matter how large or small, participating operations cannot be identified when the results of the study are reported.

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